8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

534 Jointed bugles and cymbals and brass gongs are more rarely used but they can be played at almost any time.

574 The Ch'uan Miao are very hospitable. A friend can stay in a home for a week or ten days and he will be given food and a bed and charged nothing for them. Chickens are considered especially good and appropriate for entertaining guests. Sometimes both a cock and a hen are killed and some of the meat may be left for the guest to take home with him. The greatest hospitality a Ch'uan Miao can show is to kill a young grown cow or bull and to give a feast to which other friends are invited. Next in importance to a cow is a sheep or goat, then a pig and then a chicken.

572 Friendship among the Ch'uan Miao is sincere and deep and they respond to friendship and kindly treatment. By the very tones of the voice it can be discerned whether the Ch'uan Miao is very friendly and familiar with the person to whom he is speaking, or only fairly so, or not at all, or is an enemy.

V. SOCIAL CUSTOMS

831 Friendship, fellowship, appreciation, sympathy, love and marriage between the sexes is as natural as eating, and they are craved by most people of both sexes. The sex appeal may be one of the most powerful influences for good or for evil. If satisfaction cannot be had in normal and approved ways it will often be sought in ways that are irregular and harmful.

The life of the average Ch'uan Miao, who lives in a simple hut on a high mountain, with no pictures or ornaments in the home, no schools or books, meager furniture, much hard work, few neighbors, simple food, no theatricals and little or no play, is humdrum. It is not unnatural that aside from eating sexual love and sexual intercourse are among the primary enjoyments of life.

The Ch'uan Miao customs in the past have apparently been such that affection between men and women resulted in sexual intercourse, generally illicit. Nearly all the love songs tell of love affairs between men and other men's wives or between women and men to whom they were not married but with whom they enjoyed sexual relations. Some of the legends express disapproval of parents who raised objections because young men were spending the nights in the bedrooms of their daughters and others mention with approval the fact that parents purposely had outside doors for the bedrooms of their daughters so that their lovers could easily enter and spend the night there.

/72 cont./

881 The menstruating Meau girl is ashamed and tries to find out from her mother whether she is ill; she is also reticent about talking with other adults. The mother explains the facts of life to the girl, unless this has already been done by older playmates, as is usually the case. Boys naturally turn to their fathers with questions about sex.

[157] Girls as well as boys at the time of puberty become introspective, often seem absent-minded, and gradually withdraw more and more from the children's group, for which they have less and less time since they are put to work to an increasing extent. At the beginning of this period the adolescents avoid
• [572] the other sex; friendships between those of the same sex arise instead. The adolescents often develop an extravagant attachment to older persons of the same sex.

[774] This behavior, especially the apparent absent-mindedness, disturbs the parents. Soon it is said that the soul has left the body
[756] and that evil spirits prevent it from returning. One sends for the
[755] shaman, who begins his conjurations. /Ill. 18-21 appear here on unnumbered pages/ /73/ which make an extremely strong impression upon the adolescents.

887 Very soon, however, their attitude changes and strikes
836 out in the opposite direction. The pubescent Meau then seeks contacts with the other sex; they tend to stay away from members of their own sex, but especially from the younger children, and attach themselves to adults. It is not long before the girl, prompted by the older boys, begins an open flirtation, which usually leads to sexual surrender. The pubescent boys also seek sexual intercourse and approach the older, still unmarried girls, but never married women (see the section, "Courtship and Betrothal," in this chapter). They follow the older boys on their pursuit of girls and try to watch them and it is not long before they, too, are experienced in all phases of love-making (see the section, "Sexual Development," in this chapter).

883 The pubescent Meau begin to pay attention to cleanli-
[515] ness and wash themselves several times a month. They think a great deal about their future. They picture their home.

[Text continues on p. 112]

/98 cont./

584 marriage /99/ proposal is accepted, the young man and his family go to the bride. There a celebration lasts all day and all night. Then they all go with the bride to the village of the young man."

When the villages are small and far apart, as they are particularly in the case of the Meau settlements in northern Thailand, which makes it difficult for the young man to find [648] a bride himself, one turns to a Chinese trader, and he serves as go-between, for which he is paid a special remuneration (see the present chapter, the section "Dissolution of Marriage," and the chapter, "Trade").

572 584 608 Moreover, child betrothals are also customary. It happens, especially among blood brothers or friends, that they decide to strengthen these bonds still more through a marriage of the children. This decision is often made when the children are still small, often soon after their birth. For confirmation, the father of the little groom sends a silver ring of the value of one silver piece to the father of the little girl. This child betrothal, however, does not force the young people to marry for the principle holds good that no one can be forced into marriage and the young people themselves should come to an agreement on this question. If later, for instance, one of the 572 584 608 614 686 partners of such an early betrothal refuses to honor the marriage promise given by the father, the latter arranges for a plenary assembly of the sib members, at which women as well as men participate. He presents the case, and the sib almost always decides to release the young people from the promise of their fathers. But even if the opposite decision were reached, the betrothed can still insist on their refusal. If it is the groom who refuses, no indemnity has to be paid; if the girl refuses, however, three pieces of silver have to be paid to the rejected bridegroom. One can designate such child betrothals as rare 184 584 among the Meau of Thailand, whereas Savina (1) reports from

1. II, p. 226.

Indochina that they are common there.